5th November 1935]

Mr. G. RAMESWARA RAO :—" Does the District Educational Officer generally know the language of the district he is posted to? "

The Hon. Diwan Bahadur S. KUMARASWAMI REDDIYAR :—" I think such postings of officers who know the language are arranged as far as possible."

Excise

Restrictions on the marking of coconut trees in and around Salem town for tapping.

* 470 *Q.*—Mr. K. A. NACHIYAPPA GOUNDER : Will the Hon. the Minister for Education and Excise be pleased to state—

(*a*) what the reasons are for the change in the conditions for the sale of toddy shops in and around Salem town;

(*b*) whether it is a fact that trees are not marked in and around Salem town to a limited radius for any other shop except those in Salem town and its outskirts during this year;

(*c*) if so, whether the same principle was strictly followed during last year and the year before; if not, what the reasons are for imposing such conditions this year ; and

(*d*) what the normal rent value was of a coconut tree for tapping toddy in each of the years of 1932–33, 1933–34, 1934–35 and what it is in the current year 1935–36 in the said area ; if there be great reduction, what the reasons therefor are?

A.—(*a*) The hon. Member presumably refers to the sale of five toddy shops in Salem town and ten rural toddy shops adjoining them, in one group, for a period of two years commencing from the 1st October 1935. The shops were sold in one group because there were no bids for them when they were put up in auction separately. Sale by groups is a recognized method of disposing of shops if local circumstances render it desirable.

(*b*) to (*d*) The Government have no information.

*[*Note.*—An asterisk (*) at the commencement of a speech indicates revision by the Member.]

II.—ADJOURNMENT MOTION *RE* ALLEGED GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE IN DISTRICT BOARD ELECTIONS IN WEST GODAVARI.

* Mr. P. PEDDI RAJU :—" Under Standing Order No. 19, I beg leave to move that the business of the House be adjourned for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the interference of the Government in the district board elections in West Godavari.

" The elections were held on the 28th of last month, and orders were issued a few days previous to that and subsequently."

Mr. V. T. ARASU :—" I second it."

* The Hon. the PRESIDENT :—" Will the hon. Member briefly state his reasons? "

* Mr. P. PEDDI RAJU:—" Sir, in certain cases the results were declared, but by an executive fiat the Government stated that the declarations were invalid and the notifications in the Gazette were to have no effect, and ordered fresh elections. My submission is that it is only the courts that have got that power and not the Government. Another thing is they stopped the counting of votes for which Government have no power. And the third thing I want to mention is that the presidential elections ought to come up about the middle of this month but Government have extended the date by one month."

* The Hon. the PRESIDENT:—" Has the Hon. Minister anything to say?"

The Hon. the RAJA OF BOBBILI:—" Sir, as regards the three points mentioned, taking the question of restoration of nominations, Government have, in response to the appeals made to them, restored the names of three candidates whose nominations in their opinion have been improperly declared invalid. That question is now before the District Court as well as the High Court. I consider it objectionable to discuss the matter here as it is *sub judice*.

" As regards the question of stopping the counting of votes in the Attili circle, Government have received information that certain disturbances have occurred and some arrests have been made. Government have therefore ordered the counting of the votes in the ballot boxes to be stopped, and they have asked the District Magistrate for a report. This action has been taken under the powers conferred on Government under section 38 of the Act and rule 35 of the Electoral Rules which I believe do give power to Government to interfere in this matter before the election is complete. As the hon. Member has waited for five or six days for bringing in this motion after having given notice, I can only say that if he waits for a few days more, I would be in a position after receiving the report of the District Magistrate, to place the full facts before the House. But if he desires to have this motion to-day, I have no objection to that part of the matter being discussed."

* Mr. P. PEDDI RAJU:—" So far as the first portion is concerned, I might say that of the three nominations which were held to be valid by Government, only one is pending in the High Court and I am not going to refer to it because it is *sub judice*. Other matters alone I am going to refer to."

* The Hon. the PRESIDENT:—" I think the motion is in order. Does any hon. Member object? (After a pause.) No objection having been taken, the motion will be taken up for discussion at 4 p.m. to-day."

NON-OFFICIAL BUSINESS.

II-A.—MOTION TO POSTPONE CERTAIN ITEMS IN THE AGENDA.

* Mr. C. BASU DEV:—" Sir, before the items on the agenda are taken up, I move that items 1 and 2 be postponed till items 4, 6, 8 and 9 are disposed of, because these are formal matters and will not take more than 2 or 3 minutes on the whole."